

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ عَنْهُ مُنَزَّلَةُ الْإِسْلَامَ

THE MUSLIM SUNRISE

*A Journal of Islamic Renaissance
in America*

In This Issue:

Democracy, Communism and Khilafat

The Role of Women in Islam

Light from the East

Jesus: The Messenger of Allah

Jesus in the Quran

VOLUME XLX January 1983 NUMBER 1

THE MUSLIM SUNRISE

A Journal of Islamic Renaissance in America

The Muslim Sunrise is a quarterly magazine, founded in 1921 by Dr. Mufti Muhammad Sadiq, the first Muslim missionary in the U.S.A. The magazine is an organ of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, founded by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, India (1835-1908). The Movement is currently headed by Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad—fourth successor—with Headquarters at Rabwah, Pakistan. The Movement aims at presenting to the world the true meaning and teachings of Islam. The American Headquarters of the Movement are located at the Fazl Mosque, 2141 Leroy Place, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008.

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2141 Leroy Place, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20008



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A Passage From the Holy Quran

أَللّٰهُ يَصْطَرِفُ مِنَ الْمُلَكَٰتِ رَسُلًا وَمِنَ النَّاسِ
 يَتَّلَمِّمُ مَائِينَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلَقُوهُمْ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُ
 بَأْيَّهُمَا الَّذِينَ أَمْنَوْا إِذْكُرُوا وَاسْجُدُوا وَاعْبُدُوا
 وَجَاهُهُمْ فِي اللّٰهِ حَقًّا جَهَادِهِ هُوَ يَحْتَلِكُمْ
 وَمَا جَعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ مِنْ حَرَجٍ مِّلَةً
 أَيْمَانُهُمْ بِرَهِيمٌ هُوَ سَكُونُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ دُونَ
 قَبْلٍ وَفِي هَذَا يَكُونُ الرَّسُولُ شَهِيدًا عَلَيْكُمْ
 وَتَنْذُونُوا شَهِيدًا عَلَى النَّاسِ فَاقْرَبُوا الصَّلَاةَ
 وَأَتُوا الزَّكُوٰةَ وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِاللّٰهِ هُوَ مُوْلَكُمْ فَإِنَّمَا

Al-Hajj: 76-79

Translation

Allah is All-Hearing, All-Seeing. He knows what lies ahead of them and what is left behind them; and to Allah are all affairs returned.

O ye who believe, bow down and prostrate yourselves in Prayer, and worship your Lord, and work righteousness that you may prosper. Strive in the cause of Allah a perfect striving, for He has exalted you and has laid no hardship upon you in the matter of religion. Follow the faith of your father Abraham. Allah has named you Muslims in this Book and also in previous Books, so that the Messenger may be a witness over you, and that you may be witnesses over mankind. Then observe Prayer, and pay the Zakat, and hold fast to Allah. He is your Master; an excellent Master and an excellent Helper.

(Al-Hajj: 76-79)

Sayings of the Holy Prophet

Umar ibn Khattab relates: We were sitting one day with the Holy Prophet when a man appeared among us whose clothes were of an intense whiteness, whose hair was very black, who bore no mark of travel and who was not known to any of us. He sat down in front of the Holy Prophet, their knees

touching, and placing his hands on his thighs he said: Muhammad, tell me about Islam. The Holy Prophet said: Islam is that you should bear witness that there is no one worthy of worship save Allah alone and that Muhammad is His Messenger, and that you should observe Prayer, pay the Zakat, observe the fast during Ramadhan, and perform the Pilgrimage to the House if you can afford the journey thither. The man said: That is right. We were surprised that he inquired and also confirmed the correctness of the answer. He then said: tell me about faith. The Holy Prophet said: That you should believe in Allah, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day, and that you should believe that He determines the measure of good and evil. The man said: That is right. Now tell me about the due performance of obligations. The Holy Prophet said: That you should worship Allah as if you are beholding Him, and if not then in the consciousness that He is watching you. The man said: Now tell me about the Hour of Judgment. The Holy Prophet said: He who is being asked knows no more about it than the one who asks. The man then said: Well, tell me some of the signs of its approach. The Holy Prophet made answer: That the handmaiden should give birth to her master and that barefooted, barebodied, penurious goatherds should be seen lording it in great mansions. Then the man departed, and I remained a while. The Holy Prophet said to me: Umar, do you know who the questioner was? I said: Allah and His Messenger know best. He said: It was Gabriel who came to instruct you in your faith (Muslim).

Editorial:**Democracy, Communism
and
Khilafat**

Although the concepts and practice of certain aspects of Communism and Western Democracy have been interwoven in the fabric of human institutions from ancient times, yet their fierce global confrontation is a phenomenon of only recent history. In our times, they seem to be locked in a mortal struggle. Both of them consider the other system as the source of the perpetuation of the exploitation of the weak and the poor. Both view each other as the supreme threat. Both are systematically utilizing their maximum resources to destroy the other for good.

For an adequate discussion of these two ideologies, it seems necessary to establish their generally accepted definitions. Their major goals should be analyzed and the desirability and attainability of these objectives should be evaluated. In the present discussion both of them will also be compared with an ideology of spiritual background, that is, the concept of Khilafat in Islam. Since Islam too claims to offer guidelines toward the establishment of a universal order for mankind as do Communism and Western Democracy, their comparison becomes highly significant and deeply relevant to the future of mankind.

Democracy

The concept of Democracy has been practiced in one form or the other in the world since the evolution of communal life among the people. Yet it has been almost impossible to define it. Is it a purely political ideology? Or, does it also imply a certain social or economic

structure? Obviously, without specifying a definitive basis and some reasonable boundaries, it will not be possible to make a meaningful comparison of Democracy with Communism and Khilafat. However, in spite of the extensive use of the slogan, Democracy has hitherto defied any universally acceptable definition. In fact, as Gyorgy and Blackwood point out, it is incapable of definition "because it has almost as many definitions as the socio-political contexts in which the term is used."¹

Furthermore, the use of the word Democracy neither excludes nor necessarily renounces the concept of Communism. As Gyorgy and Blackwood state:

"Marxists, for instance frequently speak of Communist countries as 'People's Democracies' and suggest that Western countries that use the term in a different context are actually not democratic at all... In fact, Democratic Socialism... is not only viable but thriving in some parts of the world."²

Among the various contexts of the term "Democracy" are the political, social and economic. While political democracy may indicate a type of governing system, the socio-economic aspects presuppose equality of various kinds. In a definition of social and economic democracy, for example, equality is considered as one of the necessary ingredients. But, what is equality? It can have a variety of dimensions. It can mean, for example, political equality in the sense of equality at the ballotbox through each person's access to the place of voting, freedom to cast his or her vote as he or she wishes and that each vote is given equal weight. On the other hand, political equality could also mean equality in the ability to be elected to public office.³

Other perceptions of equality may include equality before the law, equality of opportunity, economic

equality, social equality and equality of respect. Even this rather broad classification cannot cover various aspects comprehensively. In addition, there are several informal avenues of inequality. Racial and sexual discrimination may perhaps be considered the most common.

It may also be noted that economic and social inequality can consequently impair and limit political equality as well. For example, a poorer person cannot usually enjoy the same facilities to participate in the selection of candidates. Conversely, substantial financial support by the wealthy to a candidate's campaign can often effectively reverse the outcome of an election. Other aspects of political inequality may include difficulties faced by the older voters to the polling place or lack of access to complete information by the less privileged class.⁴

Similarly, inequality of opportunity can retard an individual's ability to move up or down in the social system. Artificial barriers are often raised by the elite in power against the poor to make it impossible for him to enjoy the fruits of his ability and hard work.

It is rather ironic to note that various aspects of equality which Democracy aims to achieve are inherently opposite to each other. For example, while economic equality pre-supposes that all members of the society should enjoy equal standards of living, equality of opportunity gives free hand to the rich capitalist to exercise the freedom of exploiting the poor. In other words, equality of opportunity is bound to create economic inequality.

The second major goal of Democracy is considered to be liberty and freedom. However, just as absolute equality is repudiated by the advocates of Democracy, absolute liberty is also generally rejected. It is argued that, in their ideal form, both are deemed as neither desirable nor achievable.

Among various aspects of Democracy, the most extensively discussed is, of course, political democracy although it is just as difficult to define it as social or economic democracy. Of course, in spite of the ambiguities of its definition, it is generally assumed that equality and liberty are the intended fruits of political democracy. However, since absolute equality and total liberty are neither attainable nor desirable, only a certain degree of these two goals may be achievable. Scholars in the field have been engaged in an unending discussion in regard to the exact extent to which these goals should be realistically pursued.

Among various definitions of "political" democracy, one is given by Waltzer as:

"Democracy is a political system in which the people or citizenry consent to and are major participants in their governance."⁵

Ranney states that democracy is a form "in which government decisions are ultimately controlled by all the adult members of the society."⁶

Obviously, it is virtually impossible to receive total unanimity of all citizens on all issues, therefore, it is generally agreed that, in Democracy, the will of the majority prevails. It is also clear that it is logically impossible to seek the opinions of all citizens on all issues directly. Therefore, it is already agreed that direct democracy, otherwise known as "pure democracy," is impossible to be practiced. It does not exist anywhere in the governmental process of our times. To some degree it was applied in the small city-states of the ancient Greek period but it has become increasingly impracticable since then. The only practical way to implement it has been through elected legislatures.

The question often raised, however, is in regard to the desirability of leaving the decision-making power in the hands of the usually uninformed, inadequately educated citizens. This issue becomes all the more crucial when it is realized that with the complexities of modern world

affairs and the application of highly advanced technology and the sophisticated principles of international economies and commerce, the decision-making process is already far beyond the ability of the common man. Consequently he depends heavily upon the knowledge fed to him by the authorities holding power. Invariably he is swayed by propaganda, slogans, Madison Avenue selling techniques, image-makers, and emotional appeals. Election campaigns are, therefore, becoming a complex art, practiced by huge public relations firms and financed by millions of dollars of campaign funds. Representatives are elected much more on the basis of the amount of money spent in the campaigns by the image-making agencies rather than their qualifications and convictions.

Very often the result of this kind of elections is, of course, that legislatures of Western Democracies are filled with oligarchical elite. While the subtleties of government remain beyond the interest, grasp or understanding of ordinary people, those who can spend enormous wealth, either their own or accumulated through campaign funds, take over the control of the system.

Critics of democracy also argue that, since the majority of people have only average intelligence, therefore a government controlled by the majority, at its best, can only be average or mediocre.⁷

In a system where money controls the process of election and subsequently the entire government structure, outstanding intellectuals shy away from participation in the political institutions. The power is transferred to the politicians who pass laws on the basis of what will gain the most popularity with the majority. The government, therefore, becomes biased in favor of the lowest common denominator. Or, as the voice of American Conservatism, Professor Russel Kirk comments:

"Aye, men are created different; and a government which ignores this law becomes an unjust government, for it sacrifices nobility for mediocrity, it pulls down the aspiring natures to gratify the inferior natures."⁸

It is also argued that mechanism for decision making in democracy, due to the constant concern of the politicians to determine what is most popular with the masses, becomes slow, sluggish, retarded and inefficient. This basic weakness of the system becomes even more pronounced in today's electronically powered society where immediate, prompt and speedy decisions have increasingly become an absolute necessity. As the critics often point out, democracy is a hopelessly visionary idea based on a number of impossible principles that can never really work because they are too idealistic.⁹

Even in the ancient period of Greek civilization when democracy was practiced relatively less indirectly, the great philosophers like Aristotle considered that democracy is a bad form of government because in this system a segment of the community rules only in its own selfish interests.

Communism

Communism, like Democracy, is an ideology which is subject to many interpretations. Both have been practiced in some form by the early societies. Both, in their idealistic visions, are utopian in nature. Both comprehend political, as well as economic and social dimensions. Like Democracy, the concept of Communism has continued to change.

As defined by Macridis, Communism is the "economic and social system whereby all the means of production are concentrated in the hands of the community or the State, and in which the production and allocation of goods and services is decided by the community and the State."¹⁰

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Alfred Meyer says that Communism has been "an ideal, a political movement, a method of analysis and a way of life."¹¹

Even the preceding attempts to project rather broad definitions of Communism do not fully comprehend the entire concept. Although some aspects of Communism were adopted by early societies, it was not until the second half of the eighteenth century that more numerous schemes for reconstituting an egalitarian society started to be discussed. Later, in 1848, Karl Marx and his associate, Friedrich Engels, wrote their famous *Communist Manifesto*. Since then there have been numerous revisions of the basic concept leading some writers to comment that there is not "a communist ideology" but communist ideologies.

Marx explained his theory on the premise that history is based on conflict. He gave an economic interpretation to the history of mankind in which private property continued to be the source of friction and warfare. He believed that, in order to stop this unending struggle, the workers and peasants must be saved from exploitation by the capitalists. He, therefore, advocated ultimate abolition of all private property.

Borrowing his major ideas from Hegel's dialectics, Malthus, Adam Smith and Ricardo's economic theories and French utopian socialists, Marx developed his theory against the economic and social repercussions of the nineteenth century Industrial Revolution. Considering capitalism as the root of all problems, he declared the elimination of bourgeoisie and dictatorship of the proletariat as necessary prerequisites toward the ultimate creation of a classless society.

Since the death of Marx, Communism has developed several new faces such as Leninism, Maoism, Titoism, etc. To the Chinese Communists, today's Soviet Communism is nothing but revisionism and, therefore, worse than capitalism. Marxism, in its original form, is neither being practiced in any of the contemporary socialist states nor does it appear likely that it ever will be. As against the prediction of Marx, national

boundaries of the States are becoming even more pronounced. Instead of the dictatorship of the proletariat, power has concentrated in the hands of the few. The State is no where near the goal of withering away. Absolute equality still remains to be a remote and far fetched dream. Class similarities have failed to overcome national differences. Even though Marx has had a deep impact upon the thinking of many modern leaders, it has not been embraced anywhere in its entirety. As Ebenstein has concluded:

"Although Marx's ideas contributed to important changes and social reality and analysis, the relevance of his thought diminishes as the post-Marxian world becomes increasingly different from the world that Marx knew."¹²

Present day Communist states, at their best, have become large-scale industrial enterprises in their economic structure, consequently giving birth to large-scale and often unwieldy bureaucracies.

The expansion of Communism in the world has not been without the use of force. The Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 was followed by several years of bloodshed and devastation, just as the Chinese Revolution of 1949 brought about forced collectivization of land. The deeply-rooted desire of the peasant to own his own land continues to remain strong in spite of the governments' ruthless repressive measures. The major issue in our times in the Communist countries still remains to be not whether the government owns the means of production but who owns the government? Even though the Communist party does not enjoy any constitutional governing authority in the Soviet Union, it is given broad coercive powers to help ensure that its orders are carried out.¹³

Morality in Communism and Democracy

From the religious and spiritual point of view, a leading issue is whether there is any role of morality in

these ideologies. An integral basis of the Communist philosophy is the inevitability of the historical process of dialectical materialism which automatically excludes any discussion of the existence of God and consequently the role of the Divine Hand in the creation, design and operation of this universe. Moral standards, if any, are therefore determined by the respective ideologies unilaterally. For example, Western democracies accuse Communism of depriving the individual of his fundamental human freedoms and robbing him of any measure of incentive toward his economic venture. In fact, it labels Communism pejoratively as totalitarian. On the other hand, Marx described the capitalist West as "moved by blind self-seeking where people are mercilessly exploited."¹⁴

In short, both systems are inherently materialistic. At their best, they are amoral; at their worst, one is generally considered totalitarian, the other is often called exploitative.

Khilafat

The institution of Khilafat is uniquely different from both systems discussed earlier. Based upon spiritual foundations, it derives its strength from divine guidance. It finds its inspiration, as well as its distinctive character, stemming from divine revelation to God's messengers and prophets. Since the advent of Muhammad as the last law-bearing prophet, Khilafat has been identified only with Islam although there were Khalifas of the Biblical prophets also.

The word *Khilafat* literally means "succession." In Islamic terminology, it has meant succession after a prophet or a messenger of God. Before Holy Prophet Muhammad, we find examples of personal successors to the prophets like Moses and Jesus. Within Islam, it has been an elective institution. However, the very fact that a person is elected a Khliifa, a successor to a messenger of God, implies that he is considered as the bearer of the traits and characteristics of the prophet. As Hazrat Mirza

Ghulam Ahmad, Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, wrote:

“Khalifa means successor, and a Messenger’s successor in real terms is he who possesses the Messenger’s virtues by way of reflection... The Holy Prophet, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, did not wish to apply the Title of Khalifa to wayward monarchs because Khalifa is in fact a reflection of the Messenger. Since it is not possible for any man to live forever, God willed to keep alive until the day of Judgment the reflection of Messengers, who are the noblest and highest among mankind. He therefore designed Khilafat so that the world may never remain devoid of the blessings of Messengership.”

According to the Islamic concept, therefore, the purpose of the institution of Khilafat is to carry forth and fulfill further the goals of prophethood.) As Hazrat Ahmad, the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, explained God has destined that His messengers should ultimately prevail.

In the Holy Quran, the mission of the advent of a prophet has been described in the form of a supplication offered by Prophet Abraham and his son Ishmael as the foundations of Kaaba were raised. It says:

“Our Lord, raise up from among them a Messenger who may recite to them Thy Signs and teach them the Book and Wisdom and may purify them. Surely, Thou are the Mighty, the Wise.”

In the light of the above, if the purpose of the Khilafat is to promote and expand the goals of prophethood, then an understanding of these goals becomes extremely relevant. Hazrat Ahmad explained these objectives as follows:

“The first duty of a prophet is to preach his mission to the people and to invite them to the path of truth and rectitude. This is to say, he

calls on people to the acceptance of his claims and teachings and reinforces his preaching by reasons and arguments and by the heavenly signs which God manifests at his hands. His second duty is to train and educate those who have accepted him as God's messenger into the laws and teachings that have been revealed to him.

"The third great responsibility which God imposes upon him is to teach his followers the significance and inwardness of the ordinances, precepts and rituals of the religion; and his fourth duty which is at once the aim and object of all religions is to bring about in his followers a great spiritual and moral transformation with all the resources at his command and to raise them from the lowest depths of moral turpitude to the highest pinnacles of spiritual glory."¹⁶

According to the Islamic concept, the mission of a prophet is so vast, awesome and colossal that it is beyond the power of a human being to complete it in a lifetime. It is, therefore, absolutely imperative that he should be succeeded by his Khalifas who would continue and bring his mission to fulfillment.

A Khalifa, therefore, becomes the spiritual leader of a community destined to establish a divinely inspired social and economic order. His responsibilities are vastly different from those of the president of a State or the secular head of a government. Islamic tradition, therefore, provides a unique procedure for his appointment. Almost immediately after the death of a prophet or a Khalifa at a time when the believers are still deeply grief-stricken, when there is hardly any opportunity to harbor any partisan feelings, a successor Khalifa is elected. It is believed that at this moment of extreme emotional turmoil, the election procedure takes place with extraordinary spontaneity. Thus, the Divine Will guides the outward procedure of election by the believers.

As the Holy Quran says:

“Allah has promised to those among you who believe and do good works that He will, surely, make them Successors in the earth, as He made Successors from among those who were before them; and that He will, surely, establish for them their religion which he has chosen for them; and that after their state of fear He will grant them peace and security. They will worship Me, and they will not associate anything with Me. Then those who disbelieve thereafter, they will be the rebellious ones.”¹⁷

The foregoing passage indicates, on the one hand, the enormity of the mission associated in the divine design with the institution of Khilafat. On the other hand, it also explains that behind the electoral procedure of a Khalifa, it is the Hand of the Almighty which picks the Successor for this tremendous task. Obviously, there is no possibility, therefore, that a person thus divinely appointed can be deposed by any human procedural action.

In the Holy Quran, it is also prophesied that, in the latter days, Islam will experience a final and enduring renaissance with the coming of the Messiah. The institution of Khilafat, therefore, established after him, would logically continue until the Day of Judgment. As Hazrat Ahmad wrote:

“So therefore, my dear friends, when this has always been the way the Will of Allah works, showing two manifestations of His power, so that He should demolish two false joys of the opponents, it is impossible that now He should proceed to alter this long established Divine practice. You should not therefore grieve over this that I have told you, nor should you let yourself be heartbroken, for you are destined to see the second manifestation of God’s power as well. And the coming of that manifestation would be better for you, for it would be

everlasting, of which the chain shall not break until the Day of Qiyamah, And that second manifestation cannot come except after I am gone. But when I go away, Allah shall send the second manifestation for you, and it shall stay with you always, as has gone Allah's promise in Baraaheen-i-Ahmadiyyah, a promise which is not for me personally, but for you. For has not Allah said that to my followers He would vouchsafe power and dominance?

It is necessary that the day of my separation from you should come, so that after that should come the day which is the day of the promise that shall stand forever. The Almighty God Who is our God is true and faithful to His pledged word: He would show you all those things He has promised."¹⁸

In the Islamic history, the Khilafat was first instituted on the death of the Holy Prophet Muhammad. Four khalifas, Abubakr, Umar, Uthman and Ali, succeeded him in a period of about thirty years. In these three decades the sapling tree of Islam became firmly rooted and its branches spread far and wide. Nation after nation beyond the borders of Arabia came under its sway and large numbers embraced its message. The soundness of this spiritual order was thus successfully tested.)

A Comparative Evaluation

The foregoing discussion leads us to several major aspects of comparison and contrast of the institution of Khilafat with the secular systems of Democracy and Communism.

The concepts of Democracy and Communism have hitherto not received universally accepted and reasonably well spelled out definitions. Their exact meaning depends upon the context in which they may be used. Since the end of the Second World War, Communism, in practice, has become widely multilithic.

Khilafat, to the contrary, has been specifically defined in the Islamic tradition. The process of the election of the Khalifa, the role of the Divine Hand in his appointment and the purpose of instituting this unique system have been correctly articulated.

Communism and Democracy have both proven to be utopian dreams. While "pure" or "direct" democracy was to some extent practiced in small ancient communities, it has, since then, become non-existent. Primitive Communism too was, to some degree, practiced only in the past. The recent concept of Marxism has not been fully implemented anywhere since its introduction in 1848.

Both Communism and Democracy presumably advocate equality and liberty as their basic goals. However, both have conceded that absolute equality and total liberty are neither desirable nor realistically attainable. Furthermore, these two major goals are often in contradiction of each other. Both indicate deep-rooted disagreements on the degree to which the goals of equality and liberty can be, and should be, accomplished.

Both Communism and Western Democracy have given birth to new and rather wide-spread abuses. While Communism has engaged in autocratic and dictatorial practices, Western Democracies, based on capitalistic economic concepts, have been charged with the grievous sin of perpetual exploitation of the poor.

Above all, Communism as well as Democracy do not necessarily address themselves to the issues of morality. Any discussions of "what is moral?" and, "what is the responsibility of the respective ideology toward the implementation of morality?" have been considered largely outside of their focus. In any case, any possible answers have been strictly unilateral and arbitrary.

The very concept of Khilafat is spiritual in nature. It requires the believers to strive for the highest standards of morality and beneficence and to reflect them in their lives under the divinely inspired leadership of a Khalifa.

Khilafat in Ahmadiyyat

Since June 10, 1982, Khilafat has suddenly assumed a new significance in the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam. With the election of the fourth Khalifa, Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, it has now reached the number of successions as in the Khilafat after the Holy Prophet Muhammad. Its vast global accomplishments in more than sixty years of its existence have already proven the worth as well as the durability and endurance of this institution.

In fulfillment of the prophecies of Hazrat Ahmad, the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, every sign indicates that the institution of Khilafat in Ahmadiyyat as the second Divine manifestation is destined to overcome all ordeals of the future. According to the Divine prophecies it will be with us for all times to come.

Khalil A. Nasir

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Hazrat Abu Haazim states that he found the world divided into two parts; (1) that which belongs to me. It will anyhow reach me. It cannot go to any other person. (2) that which is meant for another person, I cannot acquire it by any means. It will go to the person for whom it is meant. Tell me then for which part should I spend my life?

Similarly, things, that have been bestowed upon me, are of two categories: Either they will perish before me, or I shall have to leave them behind for others when I die. Tell me why, for the sake of either of such things, I displease God, the Sustainer?

Deity of Jesus: Fact or Fiction?

Easter is the bedrock of Christian faith, but this year it will be celebrated in the midst of a growing debate about the nature of Jesus.

The church's ancient claim that Jesus was both God and man is coming under increasing fire.

Ironically, the questions come not from atheists or agnostics but from respected and influential theologians inside Christianity.

And it is a debate that involves both Roman Catholics and Protestants, so-called liberal theologians and teachers from denominations generally thought to be conservative.

At the center of the debate among Roman Catholics stands Hans Kung, the controversial German theologian who has been called the pivotal thinker in contemporary Catholicism. . . Kung, for instance, challenges the traditional understanding of Easter.

"Resurrection does not mean either a return to life in space and time or a continuation of life in space and time," he argues, "but the assumption into that incomprehensible and comprehensive last and first reality which we call God."

"Death is not cancelled," Kung writes, meaning there is "no revival of a corpse." But death is "definitely conquered" and Jesus is "living forever" in a different, "eternal" life.

Traditionally, Easter has meant the empty tomb and a bodily resurrected Christ who appears and walks among the disciples.

To undercut this miracle, according to the traditional understanding, is to undercut the foundation of the church's life and faith.

Challenges to the authenticity of the resurrection are not new.

Among Protestant theologians, in particular, the resurrection has been increasingly viewed as a myth or legend.

The Role of Women in Islam

by

Abdus Salam Madsen

(Mr. Abdus Salam Madsen, an eminent Islamic scholar, is a member of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam in Denmark.)

“O mankind, We have created you from a male and a female and We have made you into tribes and subtribes that you may know one another. Verily, the most honorable among you, in the sight of ALLAH, is he who is the most righteous among you. Surely, ALLAH is All-Knowing, All-Aware.”

(Holy Quran, 49:14)

This Quranic verse shows clearly and beyond question that as Islam does not recognize any difference or any discrimination due to belonging to a nation or a particular race, it does not recognize privileges or precedence due to sex. There is no man or woman; what remains only is that the righteous and Godfearing person expressed. Esteem and acceptance by God depends only on the moral and religious standing of the person, whether man or woman, whether black or white.

Part of the relationship between man and woman is given in the following verse:

“And one of His signs is that He has created wives for you from among yourselves that you may find peace of mind in them, and He has put love and tenderness between you. In that surely are Signs for a people who reflect.”

(Holy Quran, 30:22)

Wedlock, the closest relationship on earth, is not only meant for the continuation of the species, but in the purely human, personal sphere, is the greatest blessing to bring about peace and harmony for the souls. Even more, love and the deepest sympathy between the

spouses is, by God established and declared, the ultimate aim of the matrimonial alliance between man and woman.

The matrimonial alliance in its ideal form serves as a sign of God's Love for man, and the human answer to that is love of God and sympathy with fellow man which belongs to this Divine Sign. God is the Source of all Love and therefore the human love points back to God.

The spiritual position of women is spoken about many times in the Holy Quran. For that reason we shall confine ourselves to a representative selection that expounds the different aspects of the equality of women in this respect:

“Whoso acts righteously, whether male or female and is a believer, We will surely grant him a pure life.”

(Holy Quran, 16:98)

The moral and religious exertions of women are accordingly rewarded in this world with spiritual progress in exactly the same way as in the case of men. There is no difference here nor as regards the reward on the other side, as the following verse shows:

“But whoso does good works, whether male or female, and is a believer, such shall enter heaven.”

(Holy Quran, 4:125)

In Sura 33, verse 36, ten different categories of men and women are enumerated parallelly. It tells of an absolute equality of the spiritual efforts on the different levels.

“Surely, men and women, the submitting, the believing, the obedient, the truthful, the steadfast, the humble, the alms-giving, the fasting, those guarding their chastity, those remembering ALLAH much—ALLAH has prepared for such men and women forgiveness and a great reward.”

In the Arabic text the ten categories are all mentioned in masculine as well as feminine. We have simplified that in the translation.

The spiritual development of women according to the Holy Quran goes to the highest stage, i.e., revelation from God and converse with Him. We specify two examples, also known in Christianity, as well, namely the mother of Moses and the mother of Jesus.

“And We did indeed confer a favor upon thee, Moses, at another time when We sent to thy mother a clear revelation.”

(20:38, 39)

“And remember when the angels said, ‘O Mary, ALLAH has chosen thee and purified thee and chosen thee above the women of all people.’”

(3:43)

About the duties and rights of women the Holy Quran discusses carefully and in detail. The fundamental verse in this discussion and the basis of what we shall discuss in this lecture, we find in Sura 2:229:

“And as the women have duties, they have similar rights in equity, but men have a rank above them.”

The last half of the verse in no way negates the first, as the men only have specific precedence as they, and they alone, are responsible for the maintenance of the family. “Men are responsible for women. . .,” says the Holy Quran in 4:35, “as ALLAH has made one of them excel the other. . .” e.g., with a larger part of the inheritance—and the verse goes on, “and as they give out of their property.” As men must pay mahr or dowry, and are duty bound to support wife and children also after lawful divorce, rights and duties must always correspond. And if the duties are increased for one, he is accordingly given more rights as head of the family.

For the same efforts and the same work, the same reward is given also in secular respects. The Holy Quran says:

“Men shall have a share of that which they have earned, and likewise women shall have a share of that which they have earned.” (4:33)

About contracting marriage, the right to consent or refuse must also hold the same for women.

“Oh ye who believe, it is not lawful for you to inherit women against their will. . .” (4:20)

And the same verse goes on that also the freedom of women to divorce exists.

“Nor should you detain them wrongfully.”

This right of divorce for women is apparent from the verse above, which unequivocally says that the women, without giving any other reason than dislike of the spouse, can obtain divorce by waiving the remaining part of the mahr (dowry).

“But if you fear that they cannot observe the limits prescribed by ALLAH (namely in a loving and faithful marriage), then it shall be no sin for either of them in what she gives to get her freedom.” (Sura 2:230)

The dowry or the mahr, i.e., the amount given to the woman according to the contract of marriage, secures the economical freedom and independence of the woman. The woman does also become the owner of her own property through inheritance.

“For men is a share of that which parents and near relations leave; and likewise is a share for women thereof.” (Ch. 4:8)

That women do not just possess mahr and inheritance, but can also use it at their own discretion, is demonstrated by the following verse:

“And give the women their dowries willingly. But if they, of their own pleasure, remit to you a part thereof, then enjoy it as something pleasant and wholesome.” (Ch. 4:5)

Marriage in Islam is a matter which is most important for human life. It is thoroughly dealt with in the Holy Quran. We have already established that the woman should give her voluntary consent to the marriage. An indication of this we find in Ch. 2:236:

“And there shall be no blame on you in throwing out a hint regarding a proposal of marriage to women. . . but make not a contract with them in secret.”

The last words also demonstrate another condition of the legal marriage, namely, the marriage must be announced publicly. Some think that the above concerning proposing only applies to widows, and that in the case of the first marriage, the consent of the family is required. This, however, appears to conflict with another verse, which clearly says, that only in the case of marriage the women among the prisoners of war the consent of the family is required.

“So marry the women your right hand possess with the leave of their masters (or their families).” (Ch. 4:26)

We have already established that the payment of mahr according to the financial position of the husband to be, and the announcement of the marriage vows are required for the marriage to be legal. That is also explained in the following verse:

“And allowed to you are all others (other than those mentioned in the previous verse forbidding degrees of relatives) that you seek them by means of your property, marrying them properly and not committing fornication.” (Ch. 4:25)

This verse is confirmed by the following:

“And give them (the believing maids from among the prisoners of war) their dowries according to what is fair, they being chaste, not committing fornication, nor taking secret paramours.” (Ch. 4:26)

Consequently Islam does not allow or permit any half legal concubine, or a time limited marriage or prostitution.

Dissolution of the marriage is a very serious matter and thus encumbered with even more clauses than the contracting of marriage. “Divorce is the most hated of all lawful things.” This statement is attributed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, in the Hadith. In any case, there are many steps the couple must go through before the hope can be given up and the final dissolution of the marriage

can take place. It is clearly not enough, as some think, only thrice to say, "talaqtuk"; (I divorce you). Here we shall look at the different stages in the correct order:

1. Islam through the Holy Quran recommends to re-establish the good relationship between husband and wife at the first signs of conflict. "... and reconciliation is best." (Ch. 4:129). Are these endeavors not enough and remain without result? Then follows:
2. A statutory attempt of conciliation, as it is prescribed in the Holy Quran:
"And if you fear a breach between them, (the spouses), then appoint an arbiter from his folk and an arbiter from her folk." (Ch. 4:36)
3. If this attempt of conciliation and re-establishing the matrimonial harmony is not successful, the husband can, through a pronouncement, which he shall repeat with the interval of one month, obtain a divorce after three months. (Ch. 2:229-231). Concerning this procedure, one can read note 236, *Holy Quran and Commentary* by Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II.
4. The iddah or waiting period cannot be compared to the Western legal separation. For God gives us one more chance of re-creating the good relationship, as He enjoins upon us:
"Turn not your wives out of their houses (in the waiting period), nor should they themselves leave unless they commit and act which is manifestly foul." (Ch. 65:2)
5. If the divorce, in spite of everything becomes an unavoidable reality, after three months, even then the duties of the former husband are not over:
"And the father shall be responsible for their food and clothing according to usage." (Ch. 2:234)
6. But also for the former wife, he must provide a maintenance:
"And for the divorced woman, there should be a provision according to what is fair—an obligation on the God-fearing." (Ch. 2:242)

7. The wife can, as already mentioned, request and obtain a divorce. This is called *Khula* in Islamic law. (See Ch. 2:230)

Polygamy according to the Holy Quran is in no way the normal matrimonial condition in the society. It is evidently a practice which can only be considered in an emergency. Two verses in the Holy Quran convince every rational thinking person about that:

“And if you fear that you will not be fair in dealing with the orphans, then marry of women as may be agreeable to you, two, or three, or four; and if you fear you will not deal justly, then marry only one. . .” (Ch. 4:4)

Two conditions must be fulfilled, before polygamy is permitted.

1. There must be widows within the community with children unprovided for.
2. If one under these circumstances has, for instance, two wives, they must be treated absolutely equal in all respects.

The last condition is almost unrealizable, which is also said in another verse in the same Sura:

“And you cannot keep balance between wives, however much you may desire it. But incline not wholly to one so that you leave the other like a thing suspended.” (v. 130)

A limited and highly regulated kind of polygamy may become a heavy necessity, and thus demands a higher moral of those who must carry the responsibility. Islam is a law for all incidents and all societies. A complete law must therefore contain guidelines for a situation where polygamy becomes a necessity. As it is evident, there is no discrimination of women in this matter either. Polygamy is, as demonstrated, not the right of the man but an extra duty, which demands great personal sacrifices and a high moral of the person concerned.

Women's covering in Islam is practiced in different ways in different countries. Here we shall not deal with burka or aba or chador, our subject is only the directions of the Holy Quran on this matter—and these directions

are unambiguous. The commands of the Holy Quran are for men as well as for women. There is absolutely no discrimination between the sexes here, either.

“Say to the believing men that they restrain their eyes and guard their private parts.”
(24:31)

“And say to the believing women that they restrain their eyes and guard their private parts, and that they display not their beauty except that which is apparent thereof.” (24:32)

As it is seen, the same instructions are given for both sexes—with one addition for women. This addition, “display not their beauty except that which is apparent thereof” is, however, only a security for the woman, a sign of respect and this is not a heavy burden or a sign of oppression. They shall “draw their head coverings over their bosom,” (24:32) or expressed a bit differently:

“O Prophet! tell thy wives and thy daughters, and the women of the believers, that they shall draw close to them portions of their outer garments. This is more likely that they may thus be distinguished and not molested.” (33:60)

The believing women accordingly cover their beauty and charm, i.e. hair, shoulders, breasts, etc. The words in the above mentioned verse, “disclose not their beauty” is modified, “except that which is apparent thereof,” which according to the tradition means the face and the hands. The true Quranic veiling follows the words of the verse Ch. 33, v. 60—so that such women who believe are recognized as Muslims, and for that reason are not molested, as they, being Muslim women, enjoy the greatest respect and fast protection.

About confinement of women in their houses. Among many it is a stereotyped opinion that women have their stations only in the home and that they cannot talk to men—except from behind a screen, and that they can only go out exceptionally, and then only with the permission

of their husbands. The Holy Quran says the following:

“And when you ask the wives of the Prophet for anything, ask them from behind a curtain. That is purer for your hearts and their hearts. And it behooves you not to cause inconvenience to the Messenger of ALLAH, nor that you should ever marry his wives after him.” (33:54)

Further we find the following verse:

“O wives of the Prophet! you are not like any other women if you are righteous. So be not soft in speech. . . And stay in your houses. . . and remember what is rehearsed in your houses of the signs of ALLAH and of wisdom.” (33:33-35)

It is obvious from the verses quoted above that these commandments only have reference to the wives of the Prophet and are for a specific purpose; their task is higher than that of ordinary women; they must learn and teach the Holy Quran as well as preserve and pass on the interpretation by the Holy Prophet. So they have greater duties and are consequently promised a greater reward—as it is mentioned in verse 30 of the same Sura.

The previously quoted verse 60 of the same Sura does not only include the wives of the Prophet, but also the believing women in general:

“O Prophet! tell thy wives and thy daughters, and the women of the believers, that they should draw close to them portions of their outer coverings.”

Protection of private life and the inviolability of wedlock: In Sura Nur (Ch. 24) and Sura Ahzab (Ch. 33) we find most of the regulations for marriage, for dressing and for private life, as this is of immense importance in keeping and protecting marriage and the privacy of the family. The house, the home is the stronghold of the healthy society.

“O ye who believe! enter not houses other than your own until you have asked leave and saluted the inmates thereof. That is better for you that you may be heedful.” (Ch. 24:28)

Servants and minor children, too, must ask for permission in the house, ". . . at three times, before the morning prayer, and when you take off your clothes at noon and after the night prayer—three times of privacy for you." (Ch. 24:59)

It has often been discussed whether men and women can sit together in the same room or eat at the same table. This is a much vexed question, but we feel it our duty to treat this question in this connection, as the above quoted verse is followed by a verse which runs thus:

"There is no harm for the sick nor for yourselves that you eat from your own houses, or the houses of your fathers, or the houses of your mothers, or the houses of your brothers, or the houses of your sisters, or the houses of your father's brothers, or the houses of your father's sisters, or the houses of your mother's brothers, or the houses of your mother's sisters or from that of which the keys are in your possession, or from the houses of a friend of yours. There is no harm for you whether you eat together or separately." (Ch. 24:62)

This is a very interesting enumeration of those from the two sexes, who are allowed to eat together—the permission also includes friends and not only the forbidden degrees (i.e., the degrees with whom marriage is not permitted), in so far as there is real confidence in each other. This very detailed enumeration shows convincingly the elasticity of the Islamic teaching as well as the great importance of all matters pertaining to human intercourse.

Light from the East

by

Dr. Qazi Muhammad Barkatullah

The Muslims, as a nation, rose to power sometime after the fall of the Roman Empire which traditionally occurred in 476 A.D. The Thousand Year period following the fall of the Roman Empire, was called, "Media Tempestas" that is, Middle Ages. During that time Europe passed through "Dark Ages." At that time the Muslims were enjoying their glorious days. A phraseology was then coined in Latin: "Ex Oriente Lux" that is "Light from the East." By the time Muslim power declined, Europe had borrowed, drafted and adopted the educational progress of the Muslims. This caused, "Renaissance" or "Rebirth of Learning" in Europe.

It is said that everything has its time and every nation has its rise. The Muslims have seen their glorious days too. The period of Muslim glory was from the 7th to 12th century. During the Middle Ages the Muslims made remarkable educational achievements and their thought was dominant over the known world. Then the phraseology, "Ex Oriente Lux" meaning "Light from the East" was coined. Thus the Christian West was being kindled by the Muslim East. The Christian are indebted to the Muslims in almost all walks of life. The Muslims have enjoyed glamor which dazzled the eyes of the people of the known world. In fact nowhere in history has any nation made so many significant contributions, in the matching years, as did the Muslims in their golden days.

The people living in the Arabian peninsula were mostly nomads, living in tents and wandering from place to place. But prophet Muhammad, peace be on him, infused in them a spirit of enthusiasm and dedication that took them to the corners of the Mediterranean world. Starting from Arabia, and along the shores of the Red Sea, they swept rapidly through Asia Minor, Persia, West Africa, Sicily and adjacent islands, crossed into France

and captured nearly all of Portugal and Spain. At its peak, the Muslim empire was larger in extent than that of what Shakespeare called "Mighty Rome." The Muslims, in the east, then made generous contributions for the Christians, in the west.

The Muslims set examples of being neat and clean. They had to perform ritual ablution at least five times a day for their obligatory prayers. The Muslims not only had baths at home but, also, there were numerous public baths. The baths were made from pure marble. Some baths had three spigots from which flowed hot water, cold water and even perfumed water. The Muslims at that time had flush toilets in some of their private bedrooms.

The Muslims exemplified for the west use of daily changed and frequently washed undergarments, the underwear, slip and the chemise, as they called it.

The Muslims loved their cities. Any city was a center of thriving economy and one could find also the novelties and curiosities from distant and unknown lands.

Cordoba was a city for many nations to be proud of. It was, in fact, the "jewel of the world." The streets were solidly paved and kept in good condition. The streets were safe and illuminated at night. A person could walk ten miles straight in the light of the public lamps.

At that time, the cities in the west neither had paved streets nor light at night by public lamps. The city of London was dark at night with no street lights. In Paris, coming out of a house on a rainy day one could easily step into mud up to his ankles. The west is, therefore, indebted to the Muslims to learn to keep the streets in perfect condition and lighted at night.

The Muslims built beautiful and comfortable homes. There was a time when Christian lords were living in draughty and gloomy castles. The rulers of England, Germany and France lived in houses scarcely better than stables, chimneyless and windowless, with a hole in the roof for the smoke to escape. Whereas, at the same time, the Muslims were enjoying so comfortable and luxuriously furnished homes that Christians could not even dream of.

The Muslims in Qartaba (Cordova) lived in beautiful homes with fountains of sparkling water and shady nooks. They had retiring rooms, balconies, patios, and beautiful lawns. At that time, the Christians, in the west, were living in a poor condition. In Christian homes, there was neither a chimney nor a window. Also, there were no facilities in their homes to give them relief in different kinds of weather. But the Muslims enjoyed homes where cool air was drawn from flower gardens in summer, and warm and perfumed air would permeate their rooms in winter through earthen pipes from vaults below. Inside the room, the walls and expensive persian rugs covered the floor.

From the earliest days of Islam, the Muslims have held education in high esteem. For, "the seeking of knowledge is obligatory upon every Muslim male and female." (*The Holy Quran*, 20:115) Throughout the Muslim rule, therefore, educational institutions flourished. In the intellectual pursuit, the Muslims, became the leaders of the medieval world. In the Muslim world, there were universities which attracted students from all parts of the world. Whereas, in the west, the Christian ruler and lords were dabbling in the art of writing their names.

In an era when Christian schools of both Eastern and Western Europe were falling into decay, the schools under the Muslims were growing and attracting students. The magnificent educational advantages captured the attention of the non-Muslims. So they wished to get out of the rut into which the Christian education had fallen, and came to enroll at the Muslim universities.

The Muslim university at Qartaba (Cordova) was very famous and attracted students and scholars from different parts of the world. It had fifteen separate departments. The university building was very beautiful and had complete equipment that money could buy.

The Muslims were proud of their language, Arabic. The non-Muslims also eagerly studied Arabic. Some clergymen complained that Christians were neglecting the study of Latin.

But the Muslims did not suppress the study of the language and literature of other religions. Qartaba (Cordova) also became a center of Hebrew learning. The "Talmudic school of Qartaba," was very well known in other parts of the world.

The Muslim education was so universally diffused that it was said to be difficult to find an illiterate person. It became fashionable for the wealthy people to patronize learning. They collected books and placed them at the disposal of scholars. There were numerous bookshops where one could find a book of one's choice. In Qartaba (Cordova) alone there were seventy magnificent main libraries and rich in manuscripts from all over the world.

The Muslim scholars also fluently wrote on all subjects. Many Christians have recognized that there was scarcely a subject left untouched by the Muslims. It is said that in one of the city libraries there were 400,000 books authored by Muslim scholars. The Muslim scholars wrote dictionaries, lexicans, encyclopedias, pharmocopedias, anthologies and epitomes, etc. The Christians have therefore gratefully saluted the Muslims for their achievements.

Education under the Muslims was a great success in achieving its practical aims. The Muslim education produced people who were ready to practice what they had learned. The Muslims, therefore, devised means, methods and techniques to improve the conditions of life. They successfully employed science to their immediate service of mankind. They adopted science to their needs and devised scientific tools for everyday living. They created a spirit of scientific inquiry and experimentation which has widened the bounds of human domain. The Christians are indebted to the Muslims for the invention of tools of science which have aided in everyday life.

The Muslims developed the medical science. They became interested in medical practice because it was of practical nature and essential for preserving life. They introduced the idea of attaching a hospital with an educational institution.

The Muslims conducted an intensive study of disease, drugs and diet. They also looked into various phases of physiology and hygiene. The Muslim *Materia Medica* still makes a larger part of one used in these days.

The Muslim surgeons used surgical instruments and performed operations on eyes and brains. The Christian kings and nobles when seriously sick and also when they needed an operation came to the Muslim physicians of Qartaba (Cordova) for treatment. It is also known that the services of properly prepared medical lady doctors were secured in the delicate operations on females.

The Muslims studied chemistry because of its use in medicine and industry. They discovered many new chemical substances like alkohal, potash, nitrate of silver, nitric acid and sulphuric acid. They applied chemistry in many directions. They were, thus capable of developing metallurgy, ceramics and cultivation of science.

The Muslims developed a skillful system of agriculture. They introduced the concept of "reservoir," and "dam." They successfully used "floodgates," "pumps," and waterwheels in their irrigation systems.

They spread a network of canals in the land.

They introduced many orchard fruits, useful plants, and garden vegetables. Also, they invented important manufacturing processes.

The Muslims knew the use of fertilizers, and were familiar with the horticultural secrets of grafting to produce new varieties of fruits and flowers. They gave attention to the breeding of fine cattle, sheep and poultry. They were expert in the breeding of horses. The "Andalusii" horse was a prize animal in the Christian world. The Christians are indebted to the Muslims for culture and manufacture of silk.

The Muslims studied astronomy as it aided in geography and navigation. They made many astronomical discoveries and assigned to the stars many of their names. They invented many astronomical tables.

The Muslims invented the pendulum clock and were first to use its oscillation as a measurement of time. They also measured the size of the earth. They calculated the angles of ecliptic and precession of the equinoxes. The Christians, at that time, were declaring that the earth was flat and punished those who said otherwise. But the Muslims were teaching geography in their schools by means of globes which they had constructed.

The Muslims introduced the mariner's compass. They could calculate the density of air and had made a table of specific gravity.

The Muslims introduced measurement by weight, the smallest being a grain of barley. Four barleys were equal to one sweet pea and called a karat. The Christians are indebted to the Muslims to use this method. For example, saying "gold" to be so many "karats" fine.

The Muslims had constructed astronomical observatories. The Christians did not know how to make use of such observatories. An observatory in Spain was turned into a belfry when the Muslims left, because the Christians did not know what else to do with it.

The Muslims made great progress in mathematics. They applied mathematics in the control of physical forces, for example, in hydraulics. They also used mathematics in the study of physics and astronomy.

In arithmetic, great advances were made. The Muslims introduced Arabic numerals which replaced the Roman numbers then used. The cipher, zero, was invented and decimal notation also introduced. The nine digits were introduced and given position value. Algebra was an invention of the Muslims. They also developed trigonometry, inventing the sine, the tangent, and cotangent.

The Muslims made certain important discoveries in optics and other branches of physics. They could explain the natural phenomena like refraction of light, gravity, capillary attraction and twilight, etc.

The Muslims were able to combine art and applied sciences. The Muslim workmanship attained its climax in architecture. They produced structural gems like the world famous Alhamara, Qartaba Jama i' Mosque in Spain.

The Muslims invented glass. The glassware and pottery made by the Muslims were of the finest quality ever known to the Christians. The Italian potters visited Muslim Spain. The Muslim potters helped the Italian and French potters and it resulted in the rejuvenation of the ceramic art in Italy and France. The Italian book binders and workers in metal and glass learned their techniques from Muslim artisans.

They set up cloth mills of finest quality. In one mill, there were five thousand looms, producing all kinds of material, brocade, silk, cotton, etc. Other than textile fabrics, the Muslims also manufactured the finest quality of leather.

They invented paper. The craft was passed on to Italy and France which helped in the "Renaissance," that is "rebirth of learning" in the Christian communities.

The Muslims maintained a merchant marine of more than a thousand ships. They invented gunpowder, cannon, artillery and the mariner's compass.

They developed the salt industry. The Muslims, in Spain, once supplied salt to the whole known world.

They dived deep into the sea and brought out pearls. Also, they penetrated low into the earth and dug out gold, silver, lead, iron, antimony, mercury, marble, turquoise, rubies, lapislazuli, azurite, kaoline, naptha, sulphur, etc.

They developed a taste for hunting with a falcon and it became a fashionable sport. The chess game was also introduced by them. The term checkmate is from the Persian Shah-Mat, that is, the king is defeated. They introduced several musical instruments, which are still known by the same name as given by the Muslims, that is, lute, guitar, tambourine, etc.

They gave to Christians a taste for spices, scents, ginger and coffee, etc.

The Christians are indebted to them for introducing new plants like rice, sugar, cotton, spinach, saffron, and many edible fruits.

The Christians are also indebted to them for many things with original names. Some of such things are: orange, lemon, sugar, syrup, sherbet, elixir, jar, mattress, sofa, muslin, satin, bazaar, tariff, traffic, magazine, cable, admiral, etc.

The Christians regarded the Muslims as an ideal in home and civic life, hygiene, agriculture, architecture, irrigation, calligraphy, music, dress, games and education, etc.

And the day came when Granada fell, and it fell into the hands of the Christians.

A Christian writer, recognizing what the Muslims had done for the Christians, saluted them and said that the Muslims held up the light to humanity while darkness lay around; they raised the Christian wisdom and knowledge and taught them philosophy, medicine, and astronomy and made the Christians stand on the cradle of modern science, and:

“Made us late-comers forever to weep over the day when Granada fell.”¹

1. Barkatulla, Qazi Muhammad, *Education During Middle Ages Under the Muslim*, Crescent Publications, Los Angeles, Calif., p. 19

Jesus: The Messenger of Allah

by

Jamil Mahmood

Muslims believe that Jesus (peace be on him) was a true prophet of God and not the son of God, "God or the third person of this mysterious three-way connection or, as better known among Christians, the Trinity comprising the father, the son and Holy Ghost as one. Therefore, five times a day a true Muslim affirms through prayer that Allah is absolute without partner or associate; Ahad meaning one in his rule of the Universe.

Jesus continually refers to himself as the son of man. In *Matthew* (Ch. 20:18, 28), the term son of God is used as in *Matthew* (19:28, 11:11): "For the son of man is come to save that which is lost."

The term son of God is used extensively throughout the Bible, not only for Jesus but for several other persons. In fact, the term son of God is used in a metaphoric sense, which is a figure of speech in which one object is likened to another by speaking of it as if it were that other. For example, in *Exodus* (4:22), "And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh thus saith the Lord, Israel is my son even my first born."

According to the Holy Bible *Scofield Reference Bible*, 993 *Mathew* (1:1), Jesus is also attributed the sone of David and the son of Abraham. Is it a wonder that the term had a totally different meaning? The text as we know it is but an interpretation or, as more commonly known a version in the English language. As fusions of different languages were incorporated, it is possible that the true essence and meaning of the scriptures were lost. The first authoritative Bible as we know was compiled in the Hebrew language by Moses (Musa) except for brief parts of Ezra and Daniel and one short passage in Jeremiah which are in Aramaic. This later took the place of Hebrew.

The Old Testament was first translated into Greek in the Third Century B.C. with the New Testament originating in the Greek. It is assumed that the disciples of Jesus spoke Aramaic and Greek following the Conquest of Alexander the Great which stressed an importance of Greek language and civilization. But at the same time, has any historical evidence been set forth that the present documents are authentic?

Now the question of Jesus' birth. The Holy Quran confirms Jesus was born of Mary without a father, according to the good news that had been conveyed by the angel Gabriel under divine command of God (3:43-4 and 46-8). This leads to an interesting point to be considered. Was Jesus purest of all mankind because of a birth without the natural sequence of events—No, most certainly not. It is mentioned that Melchizedek King of Salem was born without mother or father (*Hebrews 7:1-3*).

Hebrews 7:1- "For this Melchizedek King of Salem Priest of the Most, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the Kings and blessed him"

Hebrews 7:2- "To whom, also, Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of Righteousness and after that King of Peace."

Hebrews 7:3- "Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life. But made like unto the son of God, abideth a Priest continually"

The Holy Bible, thus, confirms that nothing new happened with the birth of Jesus. In fact, it was but a sign of God's power of creation.

Likewise, John the Baptist was attributed a birth of the miraculous power of Almighty God, by parents who had

passed the age of child bearing and were granted a son. In Jesus' own words:

Matthew "Verily I say unto you among them which are born of women, there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist. Not notwithstanding, He that is least in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than He."

Matthew 14- "And if ye will receive it, this is Elias which was for to come."

Matthew 18- "For He came neither eating nor drinking and they say He hath a devil."

Let us not forget, also, that Abraham was granted a son through the same Grace and Mercy of Almighty God in his old age. The Holy Bible, also, sets forth that Jesus' Mother Mary and John's Mother Elisabeth were cousins; therefore, Jesus and John had more than just a casual relationship as both women are referred to as walking in the commandments and ordinances of God (*Luke 1:6 and 1:28*).

Next, let us now try to retrace the origin of such beliefs as the death and resurrection. Were these beliefs new or had they surfaced before? What was the world like before the Advent of Jesus (peace be upon him)? According to Sir James George Frazier in his most celebrated 14 volume account of the study of magic and religion, *The Golden Bough*: as early as the Seventh Century B.C., God was worshipped under the names of Osiris, Tammuz, Adonis and Attis which were prevalent in Egypt and Greece. The people of Babylonia and Syria also worshipped these deities, with the Greeks borrowing it from them. The true name of the God was Tammuz; with the appellation Adonis being Semetic for Adon or Lord, a title of honor with which he was addressed. His death was annually mourned in the spring. His "reappearance" or "resurrection" was still celebrated at the time of the Prophet Ezekiel, who saw the women of Jerusalem

weeping for Tammuz at the North Gate of the Temple: Ezekiel was therefore commanded:

“Son of man set thy face towards the mountains of Israel and prophecy against them.” (6:2)

The reason being that, through the assimilation of Jews with Babylonian and Assyrian cultures dating from the enslavement and captivity of the Jews, they had adopted the beliefs of their masters as they were slaves of these idolators, who assuming new religions totally disregarded the law as set down by Moses.

In Syria the myth of Adonis was largely localized and widely celebrated in both Byblus and Syria and Paphos in Cyprus. Both were, also, great seats of the worship of Aphrodite or her Semitic counterpart, Astarte.

Likewise, at Byblus, the death of Adonis was annually mourned to the shrill notes of the flute with weeping, lamentation and beating of the breast. But, the next day, he was able to “come to life again and ascend up to heaven” in the presence of his worshippers. Frazier goes on further to say that “In early times Adonis was personified by a living man in the character of the god.” Frazier also states that present day Christianity is no more than a carryover of the rites of Adonis.

Next, let us focus on the mission of Jesus, son of Mary, (peace be on him). What was the mission of which he was commissioned of Almighty God to partake? In his own words:

“Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the Prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.” (Matthew 5:17)

Jesus, similarly, not being a law bearing Prophet confirms in his own words that he only came to fulfill not to destroy, thus there is no law of Jesus as popular belief holds. He continually admonishes the Jews against breaking any of the commandments, but to study the scriptures in practice and teach others, as to win the favor of Almighty God.

Thus, constantly, Jesus reiterated the fact that he had been sent of God meaning he was only a messenger, for instance:

“This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God and Jesus son of Mary whom thou has sent.” (*John 17:3*)

“I can of mine own self do nothing as I hear I judge and my judgement is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.” (*John 5:30*)

“He that sent me is true.” (*John 8:26*)

Similarly, it is also confirmed in the Quran and the Bible his function was only messenger (not God), the son of God, that God would give him the throne of his father, David, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob (*Luke 1:32-3*); a prophecy which did not come true in his lifetime, therefore, we can now assume since it did not come to pass it was a false accusation.

The Holy Quran and the Bible, also, affirm that Jesus would be taught the Book and wisdom and The Torah and Gospel and would make him a Messenger to the children of Israel (*3:49-50*).

We can draw the inference that Jesus came only to the house of Israel and did not bring a Universal Message or a new religion, but instead stuck to the dictates of Judaism and the Law of Moses.

Also of equal importance, Jesus (peace be on him) continually warned the Jews that he would only be among them for a while (*John 7:33*) and that “they should seek me and not find me and where I am thither ye cannot come” (*John 7:33*). The Jews, on the other hand, hesitantly wondered where he would go, would he go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles and teach the Gentiles (*John 7:33*)? Who were these dispersed among the Gentiles? None other than the Lost Tribes of Israel.

As we know, Jesus was a shepherd, as all previous prophets were referred to as shepherds in a metaphorical sense and used widely throughout the Bible. For example:

“Other sheep I have which are not of this fold: them also I must bring and they shall hear my voice and there shall be one fold and one shepherd” (*John 14:16*)

At the advent of Jesus, Israel was largely divided; on one side, he was viewed as a Prophet by seekers after the truth, on the other side as being from the devil (*John 10:19-21*) by people deeply engrossed in the pleasures of the world.

Jesus, at the same time, admonished his disciples not to go in the way of the Gentiles (idolatry) and enter into any city of Samaritans (*Matthew 10:5, 6*), but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

When Jesus was approached by a woman from Canaan who requested the help of Jesus in the matter of her daughter being vexed with a devil:

“He answered and said, ‘I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.’” (*Matthew 15:22, 23*).

Last and finally, it can be seen that the message with which Jesus came was undoubtedly for the Jews alone, and preferably for the lost tribes of Israel, whom Jesus knew would reject his message of which his most famous statement verifies (a Prophet is without honor save in his country).

Can modern science explain the physical realm of a man who was spiritually raised from the dead (Jews who were spiritually dead) who died among the rich (those who submit to God) in his death being as honored messenger?

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Jesus in the Quran

by

Falahud Din Shams

God revealed the Holy Quran to prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) which clarified everything about Jesus. The Holy Quran removed many misconceptions about him. It declared that he did not die on the cross because death on the cross is God's punishment reserved for false prophets. His enemies tried to kill him but God came to the aid of His honored prophet and saved him from the disgraceful death and upheld his claim that he was a true messenger of God.

Besides removing the misconceptions, the Holy Quran restored the proper respect of Jesus as a holy prophet and a messenger. Furthermore, in order to refute all other doubts and man-made dogmas, the Holy Quran described and revealed the true position of Jesus.

Let us first look at some of the misconceptions about him which have been removed by the Holy Quran. The most grievous misconception about Jesus is that he was accursed of God which makes him an enemy of God—just as Satan has been declared accursed being the enemy of God. The Holy Quran declared:

“And their saying ‘we did kill the Messiah Jesus, son of Mary, the messenger of Allah,’ whereas they slew him not, nor killed him by crucifixion, but he was made to appear to them like one crucified and those who differ therein are certainly in a state of doubt about it; they have no definite knowledge thereof, but only follow a conjecture, and they did not convert this conjecture into a certainty.” (4:158)

The above passage clearly states that the enemies of Jesus never made sure about his death and he, therefore, certainly is not accursed of God because he, being a true prophet, was saved from the cross.

The Holy Quran not only removed a major misconception about his being cursed but even some minor misconceptions were clarified.

The commandment was given, "Honor thy father and thy mother," but it appears from Matthew Chapter 12 that Jesus showed a kind of rudeness towards his mother by addressing her, "O woman," etc. The Holy Quran did not even bear to keep that small blemish on the character of this eminent prophet of God. The Holy Quran said:

"Jesus said: I am a servant of Allah, He has given me the book and made me a prophet. And He has made me blessed wheresoever I may be and has enjoined upon me prayer and almsgiving so long as I live. And He has made me dutiful towards my mother and He has not made me haughty and unblessed." (19:33)

Not only God described Jesus as dutiful to his mother but also stated that it was a blessing given to him by God Himself. So how can anyone believe that he behaved improperly toward his mother? Once again God, through the Holy Quran, removed the misconception about His holy prophet Jesus (peace be on him).

Once the misconceptions about Jesus are removed, the questions arise as to who was he, what was his true position and what were his claims? The Holy Quran announced the true position of Jesus as:

"Indeed they are disbelievers who say, 'Surely Allah is none but the Messiah son of Mary.' Whereas the Messiah himself said, 'O children of Israel, worship Allah who is my Lord and your Lord.' Surely whoso associates partners with Allah—him has Allah forbidden Heaven and the Fire will be his resort. And the wrongdoers will have no helpers.

"They are surely disbelievers who say, 'Allah is third of three.' There is no god but the one God. And if they do not desist from what they say, a grievous punishment shall certainly befall those of them who disbelieve.

"The Messiah son of Mary was only a messenger. Surely, messengers like unto him had indeed passed away before him. And his mother was a righteous woman. They both used to eat food. See how we explain the signs for their good and see how they are turned away.

"Say will you worship beside Allah that which has no power to do you harm or good? And it is Allah who is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.

"Say O people of the Book, *exceed not the limits* in the matter of your religion unjustly, nor follow the *evil inclinations* of a people who went astray before and caused many to go astray and who have strayed away from the right path." (5:73-78)

The above passages reflect the following point about the true position and status of Jesus:

- 1- Jesus never claimed to be a deity.
- 2- On the contrary, he preached that there was only one God whom we serve and worship.
- 3- Jesus was a prophet and a messenger of God. He was just like the prophets who were sent before him. As it was not done in the past, God Himself did not come but, following the past practice, sent one of His prophets to deliver the message.
- 4- Jesus was born of a woman—a righteous woman. He could not be the begotten son of God because as his mother was a human being who gave him birth, so was her child—a human.
- 5- Jesus and his mother used to eat like other ordinary human beings. This shows that they were not free of human needs but were subject to nature's laws as the other humans. They needed to eat food for nourishment and therefore, a person subject to all the changes which come on a man's body was God is an irrational belief.
- 6- Jesus, being a human was weak, he could do no harm to anybody but himself.

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- 6- Jesus, being a human was weak, he could do no harm to anybody but himself.

7- Dogmas like the Trinity and that Jesus was God are inventions of the people who went astray. As was quoted earlier, it took these people a few centuries before implementing such inventions in the religion Jesus brought.

It is interesting to see that all the above propositions set forth by the Holy Quran can be supported by the Gospels. Comparing the same points discussed above with the Gospels in the same sequence, we find:

1- Nowhere in the Gospels, Jesus declared himself to be God.

2- According to *Matthew* (4:10), Jesus preached worship of only one God. He said, "Get out of here, Satan, the Scriptures say worship only the Lord God, obey only Him."

3- He was known to be a prophet. According to *Matthew* (21:11), when he went to Jerusalem, the multitude said, "This is Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth." He is also mentioned as a prophet in many other places such as *Matthew* (13:57), *Luke* (13:33 and 24:19), and *John* (6:14). In essence, he has been called a prophet in all the gospels.

4- The fourth proposition that he was born of a woman is believed by all Christians and is confirmed by the Gospels that Mary was his mother.

5- According to the Gospels, Jesus used to eat food. *Matthew* (11:19) says, "The son of man came eating and drinking." *Luke* (24:43) says, "He took a boiled fish and a honey-comb and did eat before his disciples."

6- Gospels attest to the fact that he was a weak being. It is written in *Mark* (14:36) and *John* (5:30) that he does not do anything by himself and asked God for help in matters.

7- There is no mention of the worship of the cross in the four Gospels. Any indications of cross came later. St. Paul, who never saw Jesus and was not his disciple, mentions it. There is not a single place in the four Gospels in which Jesus even hinted towards worshipping him or the cross.

In the Holy Quran's description of all the factors concerning the true position of Jesus, the most important is the one which states that he was not God and therefore should not be worshipped. It is the root of today's Christianity and bears a closer examination. It is such a fierceful thing to assign the position of divinity to a human being that one shudders to think how it invokes the anger of God. In the Holy Quran, God has displayed His anger in the following verses:

“And they say The Merciful God has gotten a son. Now have ye done a monstrous thing. The heavens might well-nigh burst thereat and the earth cleave asunder and mountains fall down in pieces. Because they ascribe a son to God. When it beseemeth not the Merciful to beget a son. Verily there is none in the heavens and in the earth but shall approach the Merciful as a servant.” (19:91)

There are certain attributes of God mentioned in the Holy Quran. A summary of some basic attributes is described in the following passages:

“Allah—there is no God but He, the Living, the Self-Subsisting and All Sustaining. Slumber seizes Him not, nor sleep. To Him belongs whatsoever is in the Heavens and whatsoever is in the earth. Who is he that will intercede with Him except by His permission? He knows what is before them and what is behind them, and they encompass nothing of His knowledge except that He pleases. His knowledge extends over the heavens and the earth and care of them burdens Him not, and he is High, the Great.” (19:91)

These qualifications and standards can also be confirmed by the Bible.

In *Isiah* (40:28) it is written, "The Everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary."

In *Timothy* (1:17) it is stated, "God is the King Eternal, Immortal."

In *Chronicles* (29:11) it is said, "For Him all that is in Heavens and on the earth."

In *Psalms* (44:12) it is declared, "He knoweth the secrets of the hearts."

In substance, the Holy Quran, in the above passages, describes six basic attributes for God which are confirmed by the Bible. 1- Everliving 2- Self-Subsisting 3- Free from sleep, slumber and fatigue 4- King and Possessor of everything in Heavens and earth 5- All Knowing 6- Most High and Great.

In examination, we find that Jesus does not qualify for any of these standards.

1- He was not everliving because he tasted death. According to the Christians he tasted death on the cross; according to the Holy Quran, he tasted death naturally. Besides, he was born of a woman and therefore could not be considered everliving.

2- He was not self-subsisting. He said in the Gospel of John, "As the Living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father." (6:57) In *Corinthians* 13:4 it says that Jesus liveth by the power of God.

3- He was not free of sleep, slumber and fatigue. According to *Matthew* (8:24), he even fell asleep on a ship through a storm.

4- He was not the king and possessor of heavens and earth. Jesus said: (*Matthew* 8:20) "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have their nests, but the son of man hath not where to lay his head." How could he be the possessor of whatsoever is in heavens and earth when he could not even possess a small portion of ground.

5- He was not all-knowing. He admitted in *Mark* (13:32), "But of that day and of that hour knoweth no man, no, nor the angels which are in heaven, neither the son, but the Father."

6- Jesus also confessed that he was not the Most High and Great because he said in *John* (14:28), "My Father is greater than I."

It is a miracle of the Holy Quran that God restored honor and dignity to this dear prophet of His....Jesus son of Mary. He is declared to be close to God, exalted by God Himself and was near to Him. The Holy Quran says that Jesus was a prophet sent to call people to worship One God. The Holy Quran bears witness that Jesus fulfilled his mission for which he was sent which should spare him the agony of continued disgrace of being worshipped. The Holy Quran, in the following passages, clearly announced that Jesus followed the instructions of God until his death and never preached anything to provoke people to worship anyone else but one God. In chapter 5:117 we read:

“And when Allah will say, ‘O Jesus son of Mary, didst thou say to men Take me and my mother for two gods besides Allah?’ He will answer: Holy art Thou. I could never say that to which I had no right. If I had said it, Thou wouldst have surely known it. Thou knowest what is in my mind and I know not what is in Thy mind. It is only Thou who art the knower of hidden things.

“I said nothing to them except that which Thou didst command me—worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord. And I was witness over them as long as I remained among them. But since Thou didst cause me to die, Thou hast been the watcher over them, and Thou art witness over all things.

“If Thou punish them, they are Thy servants and if Thou forgive them, Thou surely art the Mighty, the Wise.

“Allah will say, ‘This is the day when only the truthful shall profit by their truthfulness. For them are gardens beneath which streams flow, therein shall they abide forever. Allah is well pleased with them and they are pleased with Him, that indeed is the great triumph.’

“To Allah belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth and whatever is in them and he has power over all things.”

How beautiful is the manner in which God has relieved Jesus of any misdeeds attributed to him. How beautiful is the manner in which God has restored dignity of Jesus which rightfully belonged to him. How beautiful is the manner in which God has refuted all those who claim that Jesus professed to be God himself.

The Holy Quran, in numerous places, has announced to the world that God sent Jesus as His prophet. God loved him so much, He spoke to him abundantly, heard his prayers and gave him many signs and clear proofs in support of his truth. He gave him wisdom and knowledge of the Book and a teaching in which was light and guidance for the people. He had a status that God only gives to a few—to whom He pleases.

Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal was once present before Imam Shaaf'ee when Hazrat Shaibaan Raa'ee stepped in.

Imam Ahmad told Imam Shaaf'ee that he wanted to forewarn Hazrat Shaibaan of his insufficient knowledge so that he too might start to engage himself to acquire learning but Imam Shaaf'ee forbade him. Imam Ahmad, however, did not stop. He asked Hazrat Shaibaan if a man forgets to offer one of the five daily prayers and does not even remember the time of the prayer he missed what should he do?

Hazrat Shaibaan replied: Ahmad! the heart of such a man is oblivious to God. It is imperative that he should punish his heart so that he does not forget his Lord again; such a person should repeat all the five prayers. Hearing this, Imam Ahmad fainted. When he regained consciousness, Imam Shaf'ee told him: Did I not tell you not to disturb his peace.

Imam Ahmad asked Hazrat Shaibaan Raa'ee on how much quantity *Zakaat* (annual compulsory charity) becomes due? Hazrat Shaibaan replied: In your religion so much is due on camels; so much on cows and buffaloes; so much on goats and sheep; so much on gold and silver; so much on fields of corn and so much on fruit trees but in my religion everything is for *Zakaat*.

*Current Topics:***Attitudes Towards Science and Islam**

When Pakistan's only Nobel prize winner, the physicist Abdus Salam, returned from Europe for a visit, his lecture at the Quaid-I-Azam University in Islamabad was picketed by Islamic fundamentalists.

Their objections were not directed at Dr. Salam's research but at the religious beliefs of the small community into which he was born. The demonstration underscored one of the contradictions facing the Islamic world: How, in the absence of a strong messianic tradition, can science and knowledge be advanced?

Dr. Salam is a member of the Ahmedis sect... While not overly persecuted, the Ahmedis in Pakistan have been understandably upset by the state's determination of their alleged apostasy and many have been quietly leaving. Perhaps because of their religious views the group includes many educated and skilled people.

For a number of intellectuals in Pakistan the tragedy of the Ahmedis' excommunication lies not so much in the area of human rights as in the curbing of the kind of intellectual freedom they believe is necessary for national development and progress. The late Muhammad Munir, a former chief justice of Pakistan, saw the ban as a first major step toward the imposition of dogma which could squelch free inquiry and experimentation.

In a book entitled "From Jinnah to Zia," which is highly critical of the Islamization policies of President Muhammad Zia ul Haq, Justice Munir wrote: "If you subordinate the acquisition of knowledge to any ideology—political, economic or religious—you reduce the field of knowledge to what the ideology teaches you because the ideology has to run through a groove, or a defined channel and does not let you out of it." Private discussions about the contradictions involved between development and dogma are not difficult to find in Pakistan which, unlike Iran or Saudi Arabia, has for

nearly a century had intellectuals, universities and laboratories developed on Western models. Now this scientific tradition, implanted during the British period, is being challenged by a faith that has become a state religion.

In conversations with believers and skeptics, there is an often repeated sentiment things are at an impasse, that contradictions loom but no one has found a way to settle them. A former history graduate student who attended school in Minnesota, said, "In a way it's like the time when Roman Catholic dogma ran into Galileo and Copernicus. I don't think the Vatican ever resolved those contradictions but at least they sidestepped them."

But intellectuals like Justice Munir who anguish over the gap between dogma and the search for knowledge, argue that messianic tradition for which the Ahmedis were shunned is what is needed to link tradition to scientific pursuit.

Western historians such as Gershon Sholem have demonstrated the links between religious messianism, the Enlightenment and the French Revolution: The yearning for redemption developed into the secular idea of progress. In Islam, at least as preached and practiced by the Sunni majority, there are no strong messianic themes or concepts analogous to the Second Coming. Instead, perfection of social relations is believed to have been attained during the life of Mohammad, and the task of the faithful is to adhere as closely as possible to old tested patterns. Risk is itself dangerous, innovation suspect. "We Muslims have had many puritans but few reformers," said a lawyer in Lahore.

... Jamaili Sekunder, a Pakistani historian and government employee, has carefully studied trends as they have evolved since Kemal Ataturk brought Turkey into modern statehood. The Pakistani government employee says... the challenge still remains: How do we hold our traditions and yet gain the knowledge needed for progress?"

Michael T. Kaufman in *The New York Times*, February 21, 1982.